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**NEWS RELEASE**



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## **Murkowski Reorganizes Military & Veterans Affairs Dept.**

(Juneau) – Governor Frank H. Murkowski today directed the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to be reorganized to provide better capabilities for homeland security statewide, as well as to improve the overall efficiency and readiness of the department.

“There cannot be a higher priority of state government than to make sure Alaskans are safe in their homes and communities. The changes we are making at DMVA underscore that priority. It also brings together a team under a single, senior leader to respond to the crucial efforts of prevention, detection, response and recovery in the war on terrorism, while at the same time providing assistance to Alaskans in the event of natural disasters,” Murkowski said.

“The threat of terrorism has caused the biggest change in the federal government in the past 50 years, with the creation of the Department of Homeland Security,” Murkowski said. “We in Alaska will respond to this new way of life by restructuring our Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to put a new emphasis on homeland security.”

Murkowski pointed out that before the reorganization, DMVA has had only a start-up level office of homeland security, with a staff of only three. “That level of effort is simply not adequate to keep pace with growing federal efforts, nor is it adequate to meet the challenge to protect Alaskans from terrorists,” Murkowski said.

Under his authority to direct changes in administrative departments through administrative orders, Murkowski has detailed employees from five other departments to the new Division of Homeland Security in DMVA. Those departments are administration, health and social services, environmental conservation, transportation and public facilities, and public safety.

“Although these employees will remain assigned to their parent departments, they will work under the daily direction of the head of homeland security,” Murkowski said. “This will increase efficiency, as well as add a synergy to overall homeland security efforts without significantly increasing the size of state government.

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The operational aspects of the new division of homeland security include:

The assistant commissioner for homeland security and emergency services will report to the commissioner of DMVA through the deputy commissioner. Each division – homeland security and emergency services – will have its own director.

The administrative order also clarifies chains of command and control within the Alaska National Guard. It specifies that the senior assistant adjutant general, from either the Air National Guard or the Army National Guard, will serve as the deputy adjutant general. The deputy adjutant general will oversee the military activities of the Army National Guard, the Air National Guard, the Alaska State Defense Force, and the Naval Militia when the adjutant general is absent from the state.

The assistant adjutants general for both the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard will exercise direct command of their specific components of the Alaska National Guard. The assistant adjutant general for space and missile defense will report directly to the assistant adjutant general for the Army National Guard.

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Attachments: Org Chart  
Administrative Order #203